

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BAR-BENCH-MEDIA CONFERENCE

February 9, 2005

A meeting of the Bar-Bench-Media Conference was held on Wednesday, February 9, 2005 at 12:30 p.m. in the Supreme Court Conference Room. The members of the Conference in attendance were:

Members of the Electronic News Media:

Members of the Print News Media:

John Taylor and Rita Farrell (by telephone)

Members from the Bench:

Justice Jack B. Jacobs

Members from the Bar:

Kathleen Jennings-Hostetter, Esquire
F. Michael Parkowski, Esquire (by telephone)
Donald C. Brown, Esquire
David G. Culley, Esquire

The first agenda item was the approval of the draft minutes from the September 5, 2004 meeting of the Conference. Upon motion, which was duly seconded, the minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.

The second agenda item under old business, was the Proposed Administrative Directive/Rule for Expanded Media Coverage. A lengthy discussion also ensued concerning the experience with the Disney case in Chancery Court in Georgetown. It was noted that electronic coverage was provided by Courtroom Connect which handled things well. However, the local electronic news media did not cover Disney since Courtroom Connect had a contract to provide coverage. As a result, there was no local electronic news media coverage of a non-jury, civil trial in either the Court of Chancery or the Superior Court during the experimental period. It was recommended that individuals involved in the Disney case be interviewed regarding their personal views of the coverage including, but not limited to, Chancellor William Chandler, Mary Tyler, Talitha Vickers, Gregory Williams, Esquire, and Stephen Shulman, Esquire. The Chair and others were going to contact these individuals for feedback. Justice Jacobs expressed concern about how the experience in Chancery Court in Georgetown would translate to New Castle County where the technology is not yet ready. The Supreme Court will want to know whether the experience in the Disney case can be extrapolated to New Castle County. It was recommended that the Conference interview Ed Pollard of the Administrative Office of the Courts to discuss these concerns.

The third agenda item, under old business, was the Bar-Bench-Media Conference Dinner.

After some discussion, it was decided that this item would be tabled for future discussion. Mike Parkowski mentioned that a good topic for a future Dinner would be the clash between the First and Fifth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution.

The fourth agenda item, under old business, was the annual Essay Contest. It was decided after some discussion that Kathleen Jennings-Hostetter would contact Justice Ridgely's office to request that the previous process be repeated for this year and/or to obtain the necessary materials to complete the process before Law Day. John Taylor and Dave Culley offered to (once again) serve on the Committee charged with reviewing the essays and selecting the winners.

There was no new business.

The next meeting of the Conference was scheduled for Thursday, May 19, 2005 at 12:30 p.m. in the Carvel State Office Building in the Supreme Court in the Supreme Court Large Conference Room. Lunch to be provided.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:35 p.m.